

WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD NORTH COAST REGION

EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

August 2003

WATERSHED MANAGEMENT DIVISION

Klamath River – Current Status and Salmon Crisis Response Planning

[Staff Contact: Caryn Woodhouse]

Current Status

The Klamath Fall-run Chinook is a week or two late this season compared to last year, and the run size may be less than last year. To date, fish health investigations do not show a high incidence of disease in the surveyed fish. Flows in the river are higher than last year – the flows from Iron Gate Reservoir were at 979 cfs in August compared to about 750 cfs last year. These flows should increase to 1,168 cfs throughout September. Temporary additional releases from Lewiston Dam increased flows and reduced water temperature in the Trinity River and in the lower Klamath River. The Lewiston releases increased from 450 cfs on August 24 to a high of 1,650 cfs on August 24 and are slowly ramping down to 450 cfs on September 16.



Salmon Crisis Response Planning

Regional Water Board coordinated two meetings of federal and state agencies and tribes in August to discuss:

- Improvements to monitoring of river conditions and fish health during time periods that are critical to salmon,
- River and fisheries conditions that will lead to increased monitoring or mitigations to reduce the likelihood of a die-off,
- Data sharing between tribes and agency personnel, and
- A specific, coordinated, multi-agency/tribe plan to respond to a die-off or imminent die-off.

The group agreed that the parameters most critical to providing an early alert of an imminent fish die-off are:

- Flow (releases from Iron Gate Reservoir and flow at the Turwar gage), and
- Fish abundance, crowding and movement, and fish health.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is taking the lead to prepare a written fish kill response plan that is specific for the Klamath River. This plan will define roles, responsibilities, and actions required in response to a reported fish kill. There will be a meeting on September 9, 2003 to finalize the written response plan and the web-based data sharing format.

Status of Technical TMDLs in the Region

[Staff Contact: David Leland]

Under the terms of a Consent Decree entered into between USEPA and a group of plaintiffs, a number of watersheds in the region were identified for development of technical TMDLs. Since 1997, USEPA has established a series of technical TMDLs in conformance with schedules developed as part of the Consent Decree. Working with USEPA in these efforts, North Coast Regional Water Board staff have prepared Technical Support Documents (TSDs) that have formed the basis for USEPA technical TMDLs in the Gualala, Mattole, Navarro, Noyo, and Redwood Creek watersheds. Simultaneously, USEPA has developed and established technical TMDLs for the Big, Albion, Ten Mile, North Fork Eel, South Fork Eel, South Fork Trinity, Trinity and Van Duzen watersheds.

With USEPA's establishment of the Mattole TMDLs at the end of 2002, North Coast Regional Water Board staff will no longer be preparing TSDs for USEPA. Instead, Regional Water Board staff will be leading the development of technical TMDLs for impaired waterbodies in the Klamath Basin, where Consent Decree schedules call for completion of technical TMDLs between now and the end of 2005. North Coast Regional Water Board adoption of TMDLs with Action Plans for all Consent Decree TMDLs in the Klamath Basin is scheduled over the next four years, through the end of 2006. During this same timeframe, USEPA will be preparing technical TMDLs for the Eel River watershed using USEPA staff and contractor resources.

Salmon and Upper Lost River TMDLs

The first TMDL analyses scheduled for completion are those for nutrients and temperature in the Salmon River, and for nutrients and temperature in the upper portion of the Lost River (Clear Lake reservoir area). A draft Salmon River TMDL analysis, originally scheduled for completion in June 2003, has been postponed until October. Preliminary results of the analysis indicate little or no evidence of impairment associated with nutrient conditions in this watershed. We anticipate recommending delisting of this watershed for nutrient impairment. A draft TMDL analysis for the upper Lost River also will be completed this fall. Again, preliminary results indicate little or no evidence of nutrient

impairment. Both of these technical TMDLs were postponed to enable the use of limited staff resources to develop and implement summer monitoring in other parts of the Klamath Basin. In addition, unusual conditions in the upper Lost River in 2002 (the dam that impounds Clear Lake was being replaced) necessitated additional monitoring this summer to characterize post-construction conditions.

Scott River Temperature and Sediment TMDLs

The Scott River is listed as impaired for temperature and sediment. Technical TMDL analyses are due in September 2004. A Technical Advisory Group (TAG) was formed this spring to provide input to staff on TMDL development, and has met twice. A temperature monitoring plan, reviewed by the TAG, was implemented this summer. Monitoring includes temperature conditions, and factors affecting temperature, such as streamflow, vegetation, channel conditions, groundwater inputs, and climate. An overflight of the Scott River mainstem and key tributaries was completed in July using thermal infrared (TIR) imagery. This will provide a snapshot of surface water temperature conditions for use in describing and interpreting temperature dynamics in the watershed. This work has been performed by Regional Water Board staff, with support from several contractors including UC Davis Information Center for the Environment and Watershed Sciences (TIR imagery).

Sediment source analysis also has begun, with aerial photo analysis of unstable areas, and road inventory work. This work is being performed using California Department of Forestry and TMDL program contract resources. The TAG is providing input on sediment source analysis efforts.

Shasta River Temperature and Dissolved Oxygen TMDLs

The Shasta River is listed as impaired for temperature and low dissolved oxygen (DO). Technical TMDL analyses are due in December 2004. A Technical Advisory Group (TAG) was formed this spring to provide input to staff on TMDL development, and has met three times. A dissolved oxygen and nutrient monitoring plan, reviewed by the TAG, was implemented this summer, and will continue through the fall and

winter. The program includes continuous water quality monitoring at selected locations, grab samples at these and additional locations, flow measurements, and focused monitoring to answer specific questions (such as the role of stream sediment on DO conditions). This work has been done by Regional Water Board staff and with contract assistance from the US Geological Survey. An overflight of the Shasta River mainstem and key tributaries was completed in July using TIR imagery. Additional monitoring of stream temperature and meteorological conditions is being conducted..

Lower Lost River TMDLs

The Lower Lost in California is listed as impaired for temperature, nutrients, and pH. The technical analysis is scheduled for completion in June 2005. A monitoring program for the lower portion of the Lost River in California was implemented this summer, in close coordination with monitoring of the Oregon portions of the river being conducted by Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ). In June, Regional Water Board staff met with representatives of ODEQ, USEPA Regions 9 and 10, the lower basin tribes, and a team of water quality experts to assess potential analytical approaches that would aid in understanding the Lost and mainstem Klamath water quality conditions and that would serve TMDL development needs. A key outcome of this meeting was a recommendation from the experts to allow an additional summer of monitoring for inclusion in the TMDL analysis. In subsequent discussions, Regional Water Board staff reached tentative agreement with USEPA that will accommodate this approach within the constraints of the consent decree timelines. It is now anticipated that a technical TMDL will be completed in June 2005, and that USEPA will establish this TMDL in parallel with your consideration of the Action Plan in 2006.

Klamath River TMDLs

The Klamath River is listed as impaired for temperature, nutrients, and low DO. The technical analysis is scheduled for completion in December 2005. A monitoring program for the mainstem Klamath River in California continued this summer. This work was performed under contract with the US Geological Survey. In June, Regional Water Board staff met with

representatives of ODEQ, USEPA Regions 9 and 10, the lower basin tribes, and a team of water quality experts to assess potential analytical approaches that would aid in understanding the Lost River and mainstem Klamath River water quality conditions and that would serve TMDL development needs.

Coordination with Oregon Department of Environmental Quality

Regional Water Board staff are involved in ongoing coordination with staff of ODEQ on a variety of TMDL development issues. Coordination has addressed overall roles and responsibilities, issues of differing water quality standards in the two states, differences in Section 303(d) listings, synchronized monitoring, modeling approaches, and stakeholder involvement. We are working effectively and productively with our Oregon counterparts.

WATERSHED PROTECTION DIVISION

Sol Fest 2003, August 23 and 24, 2003 in Hopland, CA

[Staff Contact: Janet Blake]

The 8th annual Sol Fest took place in Hopland on August 23 and 24, 2003. The North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board had an informational booth at the fest for the fourth year in a row. This fest celebrates the sun, renewable energy and sustainable living, and takes place at the Real Goods Solar Living Center. Over 10,000 environmentally conscious people attended over the two days of the fest. There were speakers, workshops, exhibits, entertainment, music and food. Staff who volunteered to attend our booth were Nancy Negley, Charles Reed, Holly Lundborg, Bonnie Rolandelli, Jonathan Warmerdam, Christine Wright-Shacklett, Janice Gilligan and Janet Blake. Julie Sayre graciously loaned us her tent to keep us in the shade, and Rachel Bosworth and Berny Reed helped with setting up and unloading the truck. We spoke with many people who are interested in water quality, answered numerous questions, and passed out various informational literature. All staff involved considered our booth to be a success and expressed enthusiasm for future outreach events.

Vineyard Erosion Control Workshop

[Staff Contacts: Scott Gergus and Andrew Baker]

Staff from the North Coast Regional Water Board's (Regional Water Board) Non-Point Source Unit's Vineyard Program, the Sonoma County Agricultural Commissioners Office and Gallo Vineyards, Inc. worked together to coordinate a vineyard erosion control workshop, held August 28, 2003, in Healdsburg. The morning session, at the Hotel Healdsburg, featured classroom presentations by erosion control experts on topics including innovative erosion control practices, proper design of vineyard roads and avenues, and a regulatory update on vineyard permitting requirements. The afternoon session, held at Gallo's Twin Valley Ranch and Vineyard, featured field demonstrations on proper installation of modern erosion control products. Over 100 engineers, consultants, vineyard managers/ owners, and resource professionals attended the workshop. Regional Water Board staff received numerous positive comments from participants, many saying it was the best vineyard erosion control workshop to date.



Workshop participants learn how to properly install various erosion control products at Gallo's Twin Valley Ranch Vineyard

The Regional Water Board's Vineyard Program provides outreach and education to vineyard owners and managers and strictly enforces water quality laws when applicable. Staff have participated in numerous outreach and erosion control workshops over the years. Staff also initiated the vineyard agency task force during the

vineyard boom years. The task force consists of numerous regulatory agencies with the goal of coordinating vineyard permitting and enforcement actions. Since the inception of the Regional Water Board's Vineyard Program staff have observed dramatic improvements in vineyard erosion control practices and compliance with water quality laws. Staff attribute this to increased awareness by the growers, increased enforcement of environmental laws by regulatory agencies, and the Sonoma County Vineyard Erosion Control Ordinance (VESCO), which has been in effect for 3-1/2 years.

Update on the City of Fort Bragg's NPDES Permit Renewal

[Staff Contact: Charles Reed]

At the June 26th Board meeting, the Mayor and the City Manager from the City of Fort Bragg addressed the Regional Water Board to provide comments regarding the modification of the City's cease and desist order. In addition, they expressed their dissatisfaction with the delay in the renewal of the City's NPDES Permit, and requested that the Regional Board direct staff to prepare a draft permit as soon as possible. The Regional Water Board directed staff to make the Permit renewal for the City a top priority.

Regional Water Board staff transmitted a draft NPDES Permit to the City on August 5, 2003 and a Board hearing to consider the draft Permit has been tentatively scheduled for November 2003. As of September 5, 2003, the City has not provided comments to the draft permit. Instead, the City has notified staff that the draft Permit has been forwarded to the City's legal counsel to prepare a legal response to the draft Permit. The City has also requested a meeting with Regional Water Board staff to discuss as yet unspecified Permit issues. Regional Water Board staff are preparing to meet with City staff and legal counsel and will keep the Board apprised of new developments.

TIMBER HARVEST ACTIVITIES

During the month of August 2003 the Timber Harvest Division received 26 new Timber Harvest Plans (THPs) and 3 amendments for existing THPs. Staff participated in First Review meetings for 13 THPs and participated in Second Review meetings for 2 THPs. Five inspections were also conducted during August 2003.

NOTE: This is a snap shot of a working database with data entered as of September 8, 2003.

CALIFORNIA WATER CODE SECTION 13267 LETTER ORDERS

There were no California Water Code section 13267(b) letter Orders issued during the month of August 2003.

CLEANUP AND ABATEMENT ORDERS

Three Cleanup and Abatement Orders and two Recisions of a Cleanup and Abatement Orders were issued during the month of August 2003. These Orders were issued to: 1) Sonoma County Department of Transportation and Public Works, County Maintenance Station were the discharger had discharged dirt fill to create a road on the site; 2) Trendwest Resorts Inc, Fill at Starr Road without proper permits; 3) Shamrock Materials Inc. was issued a Cleanup and Abatement Order for illegal Soil Placement in the Russian River at the former Louisiana-Pacific site in Cloverdale; 4) Jolene Rose & Ronald Dixon recision of Cleanup and Abatement Order for the cleanup of a spill on the site; and 5) recision of Cleanup and Abatement Order for Largesse, Inc., ADACO Limited, Inc., 18781 North Highway 1, Fort Bragg & Walsh Oil Company 18770 North Highway 1, Fort Bragg.

SPIILLS, COMPLAINTS, AND INVESTIGATIONS

Four complaints were received during the month of August 2003. No sewage system overflows were reported during August 2003.

ADMINISTRATIVE CIVIL LIABILITY COMPLAINTS/ ORDERS

Two Administrative Civil Liability Complaints were issued during August 2003. Complaint No. R1-2003-0069-A was issued to Sierra Pacific Industries Arcata Division Sawmill for discharges of petroleum hydrocarbons, pentachlorophenol, tetrachlorophenol and other toxic compounds to Mad River Slough and groundwater. The liability was in the amount of \$15,000 and was paid on August 28, 2003.

Complaint No. R1-2003-0098 was issued to the City of Willits, SWDS Berry Canyon for failure to submit the 2001/2002 Fiscal Year Annual Storm Water Report. The liability was in the amount of \$1,000 and was paid on August 25, 2003.

UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK CLEANUP FUND PROGRAM

For the month of August 2003, there was a total of \$1,428,739 in funds issued to tank owners in Region 1 from the Underground Storage Tank Cleanup Fund. There were seven (7) letters of commitment issued during the month of August 2003.

CLEAN WATER ACT SECTION 401 CERTIFICATIONS

Thirteen (13) new applications for Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification were received in August of 2003. Nine 401 Certifications were issued in August of 2003.

Information regarding all proposed certifications is available at our Internet web site at:

http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/rwqcb1/Public_Notices/401certs/notice401.html

PUBLIC FILE REVIEW

From August 1 through August 31, 2003, three written requests were made for review and/or copies of the Regional Water Board's records. In addition, a total of 37 people came into the office and requested file review during the month of August 2003.

Independent Scientific Review Panel Workshops

On September 23, 2003, the Regional Water Board hosted a public workshop to discuss the key findings of the Phase II Humboldt Watersheds Independent Scientific Review Panel report, dated August 12, 2003. The workshop was well attended and resulted in a lengthy discussion and question and answer period between the Regional Water Board members and the Panel members.

Following the Panels' presentation and public forum the Regional Water Board directed staff to organize a follow-up workshop for September 23, 2003 to allow Pacific Lumber Company, governmental agency and the watershed groups an opportunity to address the Regional Water Board relative to their concerns, comments and potential policy recommendations to the Board itself.

On November 4, 2003, Regional Water Board staff proposes that a third workshop be held to allow watershed stakeholders not represented at the October workshop an opportunity to address the Regional Water Board outside of a regulatory framework. The intent of the November workshop would be to discuss aspects of the Panel's report that may result in Regional Water Board action or policy changes that could affect other watershed users such as non-industrial timberland owners, ranchers, farmers, and rural residents.

UPCOMING REGIONAL WATER BOARD MEETINGS

The North Coast Regional Water Board will hold its regularly scheduled Board Meeting on November 5, 2003 at the North Coast Regional Water Board in the David C. Joseph Hearing Room.

The energy challenge facing California is real. Every Californian needs to take immediate action to reduce energy consumption. For a list of simple ways you can reduce demand and cut your energy costs, see our web-site at <http://www.swrcb.ca.gov>.